



## ***Irish Iowa***

By Timothy Walch

*American Heritage Series*

ISBN: 9781467139700

\$21.99 | 144 pp. | paperback

Available: **March 4, 2019**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **New Book Explores Iowa's Irish History**

*Irish Iowa* is the newest addition to The History Press. The book, part of the *American Heritage* series, is written by local author Timothy Walch and is set to release on March 4, 2019.

Iowa offered freedom and prosperity to the Irish fleeing famine and poverty. They became the second-largest immigrant group to come to the state, and they acquired influence well beyond their numbers.

The first hospitals, schools and asylums in the area were established by Irish nuns. Irish laborers laid the tracks and ran the trains that transported crops to market. Kate Shelley became a national heroine when she saved a passenger train from plunging off a bridge. The Sullivan family became the symbol of sacrifice when they lost their five sons in World War II.

Author Timothy Walch details these stories and more on the history and influence of the Irish in the Heartland.

### **Highlights from the book**

- This is the first book on the impact of the Irish people in the development of the Hawkeye State.
- The majority of the images in the book are from private collections and are being published for the first time.
- The book provides text and pictures of important but little-known Iowans who contributed to the Irish independence movement.
- It was Irish laborers who laid the tracks and ran the trains that transported Iowa crops to market.
- The continuing pride of the Iowa Irish is celebrated annually in two of the largest Irish festivals in the Midwest.



#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

As a scholar and public historian for more than forty years, **Timothy Walch** is the author or editor of two dozen books and over 250 articles, newspaper columns and reviews on a wide variety of historical topics. He is also a frequent commentator on historical issues for the Iowa and Minnesota Public Radio networks.

Educated at the University of Notre Dame and Northwestern University, Dr. Walch was employed by the National Archives in Washington DC before moving to Iowa to become the longest-serving director of the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library in West Branch.

Throughout his career Dr. Walch has been an active advocate on behalf of local and state history. He served two terms as an elected trustee of the State Historical Society of Iowa and as a member and chair of the Iowa Historical Foundation. He has been appointed by three successive Iowa governors to serve as a member of the Iowa Historical Records Advisory Board. He is also a member, a past chair and the current treasurer of the Iowa Center for the Book.

Irish American by birth, Dr. Walch is an avid book collector who acquired thousands of books and other research publications on the Irish in America. He donated these materials to St. Ambrose University in Davenport where they form the core of the Timothy Walch Collection of Irish and Catholic Americana, one of the largest such special collections in the Midwest.

In retirement, Dr. Walch volunteers in the book preservation and special collections departments at the University of Iowa and at the State Historical Society of Iowa where he processes manuscript collections for use by scholars and the general public.

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